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THE COUNSELOR
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
WASHINGTON

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April 20, 1979

MEMORANDUM TO THE SECRETARY

FROM: Matt Nimetz

SUBJECT: Report on the Jonestown Affair

Issue for Decision

As a part of my over-all responsibilities with regard to the Department's follow-up of the events surrounding Congressman Ryan's visit to Jonestown, Guyana, in November 1978, I asked two retired senior Foreign Service officers to prepare for you an in-depth study of the performance of the Department and our Embassy in Georgetown in the People's Temple case. That investigation has now been completed, and the final report is attached (Tab 3). We need to transmit the report to the Congress and decide how best to release its findings to the public.

Essential Factors

Ambassador John Hugh Crimmins and Mr. Stanley S. Carpenter have conducted an excellent and probing examination of the Department's performance with regard to the People's Temple Agricultural Community. Their research has been meticulous, involving the review of thousands of individual documents, personal interviews with most of the governme : participants, and fact-finding trips to Guyana and California. The conclusions they have drawn are, in some instances, critical of the performance of the Embassy and the Department. Their final report contains a number of recommendations for further action.

A summary of the study appears at page iii, and the recommendations are contained on pages 99 to 102. The key analytical sections of the report examine:

-- The constraints under which the Department and the Embassy operated (pages 19 to 24).

-- The handling by the Department of the May 1978 petition addressed to you by concerned relatives of the People's Temple members (pages 46 to 50).

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/ERB/MR
REVIEWED BY [illegible] DATE 2/27/81
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-- The treatment by the Department and the Embassy of the information provided in various forms by Blakey, a defector from Jonestown (pages 50 to 60).

-- The important exchange of telegrams between the Embassy and the Department in June 1978 (pages 60 to 67).

-- The roles of the Department and the Embassy in the preparations for Congressman Ryan's visit (pages 76 to 89).

I understand that the House Foreign Affairs Committee plans to complete its own investigation of the People's Temple and issue a report on its findings by mid-May. I believe you should meet with Crimmins and Carpenter to get a first-hand assessment of their evaluation and to thank them for their excellent work. I believe this report, which is unclassified, should be transmitted to the Hill and released to the public. I intend to send a courtesy copy to Ambassador Mann before the report is distributed to the press.

I agree

Recommendations

That you sign the attached letter to Chairman Zablocki (Tab 1).

That you sign a similar letter of transmittal to Chairman Church (Tab 2).

That you approve releasing the Department's study on the People's Temple Agricultural Community to the public.

Approve ✓ Disapprove _____

That you agree to meet with Ambassador Crimmins and Mr. Carpenter to review their findings and recommendations.

Approve ✓ Disapprove _____

Date 5/9

Time 10:30 Am

Minutes

Attachments:

1. Letter to Chairman Zablocki.
2. Letter to Chairman Church.
3. Report on the Performance of the Department of State and the American Embassy in Georgetown, Guyana in the People's Temple Case.

Concurrences: C - Ambassador John Hugh Crimmins
C - Mr. Stanley S. Carpenter